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Title: Regarding many fold increase in prices of air fares for Middle-Eastern Countries.

SHRI A. SAMPATH (ATTINGAL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, even though our House is almost empty and the Press gallery is completely empty, I am at the mercy of my colleagues and learned friends because in our House we have less than half the quorum. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am at your mercy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But our attendance is increasing day by day.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to invite your attention and, through you, invite the attention of the Government of India to the sad plight of more than five million Indians working and living in the Middle-Eastern countries. During every year, during the months of August, September and October from India to the Middle-East countries and from the Middle-East countries towards India, maximum number of passengers are depending on the airline services during this quarter. But unfortunately, Chairman Sir, what happens is that many of the airlines cancel their services in order to increase the airfare and to sell their tickets in black market. This happens. It is a matter of grave concern. Our coffers are not at all empty because more than five million Indians are working in the Middle-Eastern region.

Now, what happens is that all of us know that there has been an increase in the air turbine fuel. The prices of air turbine fuel have gone up to 22 per cent. But what is the justification for the increase in the airfare by five times? Five times increase has happened. This increase has happened for an economy class ticket.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your demand? Now, you have raised your issue very well.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : This is a great air robbery. This whole House has to condemn this great air robbery.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have expressed your sentiments.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : The Government of India should definitely intervene in this matter. This is a matter concerning the lives of our sisters, our mothers, our brothers and our children. They have to come to their home towns, to India.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have made your point.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : There is no other alternative through which they can come back to India. The only way that they can depend on is the airlines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sampath, you have made your point and the Government will take cognizance.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : Yes, Sir. I seek your mercy. I am not consuming any more minute but I need your mercy. I need your help. Through you only, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I can invite the attention of the Government of India because most probably our House may be concluding this Session either by tomorrow or day after tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have succeeded to draw the Government's attention and the Government will take cognizance. Please sum up.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : But before the conclusion of this Session, I need a definite and concrete decision and that decision should be implemented. I seek the help of the Government of India regarding this matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Shri Dhananjay Singh,

Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain,

Shri Nishikant Dubey,

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal,

Shri J.M. Aaron Rashid,

Chaudhary Lal Singh,

Shri S.S. Ramasubbu,

Shri Ashok Argal,

Shri Ravindra Kumar Pandey and

Shrimati Putul Kumari are allowed to associate with the matter raised by Shri A. Sampath.